

BGSU Instructor Beginning of the Semester Canvas Checklist

This checklist is designed to guide you through the essential tasks for setting up and managing your course in Canvas. Each section contains detailed steps and tips to help you efficiently navigate the Canvas platform.

Guide:

1. *Utilize the Notes & Tips:* Pay attention to the notes & tips provided alongside each task. These practical suggestions can enhance your efficiency and help you avoid common pitfalls.
2. *Refer to Canvas Guides:* Use the links provided to Canvas Guides and other resources for more detailed instructions and additional support.
3. *Check Off Completed Tasks:* Mark each task as you complete it to keep track of your progress and ensure nothing is overlooked.

By following this document, you can streamline your course setup and management, providing a better learning experience for your students.

Support and Resources

- ☐ Troubleshooting Canvas Issues and Basic Canvas Questions

Contact Information Technology Services (ITS)

- 419-372-0999
- Help Desk Chat: [ITSchat.bgsu.edu](https://itschat.bgsu.edu)

Contact the Center for Faculty Excellence (CFE)

The CFE provides professional development sessions, one-on-one consultations, web resources, learning communities, and more—all designed to help those involved in teaching create an engaged and articulate learning experience for all BGSU students.

- Email: cfe@bgsu.edu
- [Instructional Design Consultation Request Form](#)
- [CFE Sessions](#)
- [CFE Website](#)

Canvas Support

- [Canvas Guides](#)

Preparing Your Course

❑ Cross-Listing Courses

- Cross-listing allows you to move section enrollments from individual courses and combine them into one course. This feature is helpful for instructors who teach several sections of the same course and only want to manage course data in one location.
 - **Tip:** Cross-listing should be done while courses are unpublished.
 - **Note:** Cross-list before students submit assignments to prevent loss of any grades and assignments.

❑ Importing a Course

- If you are copying a Canvas course from a previous semester, then you'll want to import course content following these steps:
- You can [import course content](#) from a template shell or a course from a previous semester.
 - **Tip:** Be sure to check the box under "Options" to "Adjust events and due dates"
 - This will prevent zeros from automatically appearing in the gradebook for unsubmitted assignments when importing a late policy from a previous course.

❑ Clean Up Migrated Content (If Applicable)

- If migrating content from a prior LMS or another course, you need to review individual items, check course settings, organize content, and remove unneeded content before publishing your course. Review the Files, Modules, Pages, Quizzes, Assignments, and Discussions pages.
 - **Note:** Removing items from a module does not delete the items from your course. If you need to delete an item go to that item's page
 - **Tip:** Verify settings for Assignments, Discussions and Quizzes. Keep in mind some items may already come into Canvas published. Unpublish items as needed
 - **Tip:** For additional guidance, visit the [Instructor Canvas Guides](#) and the [LMS Migration Strategies](#) Group in the Canvas Community
 - **Tip:** Wait until the import completed before importing again
 - **Note:** The import process can take up to 20 minutes
 - **Note:** Be sure to double check assignment "Available From" and "Available Until" dates after Course Imports.

Creating Course Content

❑ Setup Modules

- [Modules](#) are used to organize your course content or create a learning path for your students.
 - **Tip:** Create weekly modules to organize your course content.

❑ Add Syllabus

- Upload your current syllabus to your course.
 - **Tip:** You can add your syllabus document for students to download to the Syllabus page by clicking on the Syllabus link in the left navigation and following this [Canvas guide](#).
 - **Tip:** The Center for Faculty Excellence has created a [BGSU Syllabus template](#) to assist you when developing your course syllabus

❑ Manage Files

- [Upload](#) and review course folders and files. [Manage the visibility](#) of content by *Publishing, Unpublishing or Restricting Access* to folders and files.
 - **Tip:** You can [bulk upload](#) files

❑ Set Up Assignment Groups (If Applicable)

- If you use weighted grading categories for your final grade calculations, you will want to [add Assignment Groups](#) to the Assignments Index Page and [assign weights](#) to each Group.
 - **Tip:** You have the ability to add drop rules to each Assignment Group

❑ Setup Grades

- Verify the Gradebook is [arranged](#) according to your grading policy and your syllabus.
 - **Tip:** You can [move the “Total” column](#) from the far-right position to the far-left position next to the student list
 - **Tip:** You can change your Total column to display as Points, if needed
 - **Tip:** You can set [Late Submission](#) or [Missing Submission](#) policies

❑ Verify Calendar (If Applicable)

- Check the [Calendar](#) tool to verify Assignment due dates and Events scheduled for your course.
 - **Note:** The Calendar displays graded/published Assignments, Quizzes, Discussions and Events with due dates
 - **Tip:** The Calendar tool allows for drag-and-drop options to easily manipulate and change due dates. Keep in mind students will be notified every time you change a due date.

Customizing Your Course

☐ Update Course Details in Settings

- Change the participation dropdown box from [Term to Course](#)
 - **Tip:** Start date—Publish your course one week prior to the start of the semester.
 - **Tip:** End date—If you want to set an end date to restrict content then set the end date after grades are due.
 - **Note:** Do not check “Restrict students from viewing courses before start date.”
 - **Note:** If you check the box that “Restricts student from viewing course after course date.” be sure to set a date that occurs after grades are due so that students have access to their grades.
 - **Note:** Do not check this box if students will need access to materials for a portfolio.

☐ Simplify Course Navigation

- For optimum course experience, hide unnecessary [course navigation](#) links.
 - **Tip:** The fewer the better

☐ Course Home Page

- The Home Page is the first impression of a course. Select the [Home Page](#) option that fits the needs of your course.
 - **Tip:** Include visuals related to your course content to engage your students and incorporate important information about your course

☐ Publish Course Content

- Check visibility of individual items and Modules as a whole.
 - **Tip:** You can unpublish any items you don't want students to see

Verify Your Course is Ready to Publish

☐ Review Students in the People Course Navigation Link

- Select People to verify your Canvas roster (teacher, student, TA, etc.) for accuracy.
 - **Tip:** The People link also displays course sections (if applicable)

☐ Validate Course Links

- Use the [Course Validator](#) to check your content for links that are not working. You can find the Course Validator in the Settings course link on the menu on the right side of the page.

☐ Review Course in Student View

- Review your course content from [Student View](#) to experience your course from a student perspective.
 - **Note:** Some third-party tools may not have student-view functionality
 - **Tip:** Student View adds a test student to Grades. After participating in Student View, enter your Gradebook as a teacher to view any Test Student entries

☐ Verify Due Dates are Correct

- Give a quick review of Canvas due dates
 - **Note:** This can be verified in the Assignments navigation link or in the Syllabus navigation link

Publishing Your Course

☐ Publish Your Course

- [Publish your course](#) about 5-7 days before the class begins. This ensures the students are enrolled in the course by seeing the course card on their Canvas dashboard and allows the student to review the course shell.

Customizing Your Account Settings

☐ Set Up Account Notifications

- To ensure you receive communication from Canvas, set up your [Notification Preferences](#) and contact method in your Canvas Account.
 - **Tip:** Show students how to set their notification preferences

☐ Select Favorite Courses

- Customize which course cards are displayed on the Dashboard by “[Favoriting](#)” or “[Moving](#)” courses based on preference, current term, quarter, semester, etc.

- **Tip:** Once courses are displayed, you can also give the course a “[Nickname](#)” visible only to you

❑ Set a Profile Picture

- [Set a profile picture](#) that represents yourself in your Canvas Account. Students will be able to see the image displayed in the Inbox, Announcements, Discussions, and People tab.
 - **Tip:** Choose a professional headshot to model appropriate photos for students

References

"Beginning and End-of-Course Checklists for Instructors." Instructure. Accessed June 27, 2023.
<https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Canvas-Instructional-Designer/Beginning-and-End-of-Course-Checklists-for-Instructors/ba-p/279128>.

Adapted Checklist: Adapted from "Beginning and End-of-Course Checklists for Instructors" by Instructure.

Contact Holly Barber at bholly@bgsu.edu if you have any questions or suggestions for updating this document.